

EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
APRIL 8, 2020

Transcript of remote proceeding:

**Michael Buono:** Call the meeting to order at 7PM. Attendance: Everyone is present, except Mr. Dunn, as I said, he is having some connectivity issues. Before we get started with the pledge, there is a resolution regarding having meetings like this, that it will be recorded and be remote. Does anyone have any questions regarding that resolution, Board members? If not, I need a motion to approve the resolution? Somebody?

**Kathleen Curtin:** I will

**Michael Buono:** Kathleen, a second ?, Mark. All those in favor, ok

**Board Members:** Aye (all 8 members responded)

**Michael Buono:** Approved

**Lawrence Edson:** Just want to make sure I get the vote.

**Michael Buono:** It was eight

**Lawrence Edson:** It was eight?

**Michael Buono:** Yup, and Kathleen was the first. Got it?

**Lawrence Edson:** Yes, Thank you

**Michael Buono:** With that, let's do the pledge.

**All:** Pledge of Allegiance

**Michael Buono:** We know this is going to be a little challenging and new for us here, for the Board to do this this way, but I appreciate everyone's participation. I do see a lot of our administrators, and we do have our Student Council from Columbia. So ladies, why don't you take it away.

STUDENT COUNCIL

**Katie Asenbauer:** Ok, Hi, so over the past couple weeks, we have been in contact with all our student council members through Google Classroom, since we have not been able to meet in person. We are currently working to come up with ideas to get students involved during this time, remotely. The class that has expressed the most concern about the postponement of Spring activities, has been the class of 2020, but right now we are focusing on ways that we can contact them virtually in order to continue involvement with the student body as much as possible. Unfortunately, our March Madness spirit week was originally planned for the week of March 16. We attempted to do a virtual spirit week through our student council Instagram, but did not have much participation, but this was likely because it was such a big week for adjustments for students and their families.

**Lily Mahoney:** As Katie said, there has been a really great concern brought to us, and brought to our attention by the senior class. More so than the other classes, although we are focused on making sure everyone is really getting involved at this point in time. One event that we are currently trying to rework in a virtual manner is the May 1st National Decision Day for Seniors. That is the day that most colleges across the nation require seniors to decide and send in their enrollment deposits by, though often times at Columbia, pretty much every year, the majority of seniors will choose to wear apparel for their post secondary plans, be it the college they are attending or another example might be if they are going into the Military, they might choose to wear a shirt that reflects the branch of the Military they are going to be going into. Overall, this has just been a really good tradition that seniors have looked forward to because it's a really great way to just celebrate senior achievements that they've really worked hard for all four years. Unfortunately because of these unforeseen circumstances, that is something that will not go as planned this year. Many colleges have

actually been pushing the day that they are requiring students to respond and send their enrollment deposit by to June 1st. So rather than May 1st, some are choosing to do June 1st or other dates within, that allow students more time especially because we have seen the cancellation of accepted students days and other factors that play into making a decision about college. We have looked into what other schools nationwide have been doing to celebrate achievements in spite of school closures. Obviously, we aren't exactly sure what's going to happen in terms of going back to school or when restrictions will be lifted for larger events, so we are trying to figure out how we are going to do this and work around this in a virtual way. Obviously it won't be the same, but we still want to make sure that everybody has like the best chance that they have to be involved in these types of activities. We have looked into what other schools are doing and what we have found is that many have actually created Instagram accounts where seniors can submit a photo of themselves and their plans for next year and we are also planning to do this. We've actually created an account already and we hope to get it going this week. The account name for people who would like to follow it is Futuresofcolumbiahs so seniors can go on there and they can send us a message and say "Hey, My name is this", send a picture, and then their future plans, whatever they are doing, maybe their major or whatever, and then we can make a post for them so that they can do this at their own pace and it will help their achievements to not go unnoticed. We are hoping to get this up and running this week because we have seen a lot of seniors starting to make their decisions. That is just one of the many ways that we have decided that we would like to start doing things virtually that maybe can serve as a new way to go through this uncharted territory. As always we would love to hear input and ideas about how we can help. Like we said before, we are not really sure when we're going to be able to hold events that we might otherwise to get students involved, but we would love to hear from people. Katie and I can both be reached through school email and as always we do encourage students to reach out to us through social media or however they feel comfortable and an easy way to do that if anyone has any ideas that they can just send us a message to our student council Instagram account and we will take that into consideration. Thanks

**Michael Buono:** Great, thanks Katie, thanks Lily, any comments? Questions from the board members for our student council? No? I know that it has been a challenging time and that our seniors have been especially impacted and I appreciate everything you are doing to try and reach your peers out there and anything we can do as a Board, feel free to reach out to Mr. Simons or me. We would love to be able to help you out. Okay?

**Lily Mahoney:** Thank you so much, I really appreciate it.

**Katie Asenbauer:** Thank you very much.

**Michael Buono:** Have a good night, thanks for joining us.

**Lily Mahoney:** Thanks, you too.

#### PUBLIC FORUM

**Michael Buono:** We are now going to move to our public forum. It's a little bit different, I am still going to read the information, but it will be coming in, we have email, a special email account that can be found on our website. Also Mr Simons will, we will try to manage that as best we can. If there are some brief comments that can be read, we will do that, but also for those participants that are here, the administration, if you would like to say a few words, just identify yourself and make sure you kinda raise your hand a little bit if you would like to speak, ok? I will read the context now:

Residents, students, employees, and business representatives of the East Greenbush Central School District may address the Board on matters concerning programs and/or operations of the district, other than matters involving personnel. Members of the Board do not directly respond to citizen concerns during the Public Forum. If a response is appropriate either the President or Superintendent will contact the individual in the near future. Those persons wishing to address the Board will be recognized by the chair of the meeting and should state for the record their name and address, or affiliation with the District or business. While the Board does not wish to infringe upon free speech protections, it must be stressed that the "Visitors' Forum" is not deemed to be an "open forum". The Board president will conduct the forum for the orderly and efficient operation of Board business. In addition, any remarks which may be considered defamatory or stigmatizing are prohibited and will be declared out of order.

There is no comment period, it's email, so I don't have to worry about the 5 minute limitations. Is there anything that came in Mr Simons? Is there anything?

**Jeff Simons:** No, not yet. For those of you who may be watching this meeting, via the live stream, the email is located on the website. It is [Egcsd\\_boe\\_mtg\\_april\\_8\\_2020@egcsd.org](mailto:Egcsd_boe_mtg_april_8_2020@egcsd.org) but the email is located right on the homepage, all you have to do is click it.

We will give it a few minutes

**Michael Buono:** Yes, we will give it a few. Are there any other comments from our audience at all? Administrators, anything? No? Ok

We'll take some time and see if anything comes in. We do have a second public forum later in the evening, so if we do get some things that come in, we can also do that then as well.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Sure, nothing as of now

**Michael Buono:** Nothing as of now, so last chance for anybody who's out there listening. Okay like I said, there is a second public forum if we get some emails and if there's some topics that we need to include we will monitor that. Is that going to be up?

**Jeffrey Simons:** I will keep it up

#### BOARD FORUM AND SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

**Michael Buono:** Now moving to Board Forum and Superintendent Report. I will kinda go around the virtual room, Jen, we will start with you since you are usually my first person at the table, usually. Go ahead, Jen

**Jennifer Massey:** I just want to do a shout out to the Bell Top crew and thank them for the parade through my neighborhood. I was working through my home office and it was wonderful to see the parade go by the house. It came at kind of an interesting time, because I was working with a client who was making some tough decisions about their business and what was happening there. So it was a great way to kinda brighten the day, see the kids come out and waving, as all the teachers and the school bus and the police officer paraded by the house so I just wanted to say Thank you to Mr Mahar and the team over at Bell Top.

**Martin Mahar:** I appreciate that, thank you.

**Michael Buono:** Thanks, Jennifer. Michelle? Anything?

**Michelle Skumurski:** No, I'm all set, Mike

**Michael Buono:** Ok Mark? Anything?

**Mark Mann:** No I'm good, thank you

**Michael Buono:** Ok, Deanna?

**Deanna Muth:** I'm good, thank you

**Michael Buono:** Ok, Kathleen?

**Kathleen Curtin:** I've got nothing, thank you

**Michael Buono:** Ok, now JoAnn?

**JoAnn Taylor:** I'm good, thank you

**Michael Buono:** Ok, and Karen?

**Karen Curran:** I just want to thank everybody for working so hard during these challenging times. All the efforts are greatly appreciated.

**Michael Buono:** Thanks Karen, I think everyone echoes that too.

We will now move to the, Jeff, would you like to talk about the next item on the agenda? The update on school district implementation, plans for continuity of instruction, student meals and childcare linked to the COVID 19

**Jeffrey Simons:** I want first and foremost, to thank everyone in the East Greenbush community for, the school district community, for what we are doing to support a very difficult time, in terms of what is happening in the school district. Under the closures of the executive order of the Governor, as the Board is aware, that school districts are required to provide continuity of instruction through online learning. As the closure periods have been extended we have modified the program of instruction through online, based on various considerations including the shift that had to occur. We were closed for two weeks and the expectation was to keep the kids connected to learning, primarily to ensure that their skills were continuing to develop and that

there was review occurring at the middle school in the high school level to keep the kids connected to the content. When the school closing was extended through April 15th, from April 1st to April 15th, Assistant Superintendent Jim McHugh, our administrative team, our department chairs, and our teachers developed some changes to that program which included taking under consideration how varying students would be doing and what supports we can put in place while they're learning at home. We also captured some feedback from our parents to a Facebook live and the themes that were of general concern were as we shift to teaching new content to make sure that we were aligned with the content the kids need to learn within the curriculum.....we're getting a little feedback I'm kinda hearing myself.

**Michael Buono:** Make sure you're muted if you're out there.

**Peter Goodwin:** Miss Barker please mute your screen..

**Jeffrey Simon:** (continuing) In considering that feedback, some of the concerns were, "can you be a little clearer about what the expectation is in terms of the amount of time students should be spending particularly at the middle school and high school level on their computer's engaged in learning activities?" "What grading decisions would impact students in terms of your ending the third quarter and shifting into the fourth quarter?" Also, concerns to make sure that any and all available tools were available to our teachers to connect with the kids including up to live instruction, video instruction as well as making sure that the Google classrooms were being utilized. So those expectations were set between the period of April 1st and 15th and now that the Governor has announced that schools will be closed until the 29th, we are fully prepared to continue to meet those expectations. We've encouraged our middle school and high school teachers to assign each class 15 to 20 minutes of work per day. If you take a student taking five classes and maybe an elective or two, that's a different experience online than it would be in class. We also provided guidance to our teachers that they were to be flexible regarding due dates because everyone's home experience learning is different. Some of our parents are working from home and meeting the expectations of their employers. Some of our parents particularly, some of our parents who are First Responders or working in Healthcare or other essential businesses, are still going to work. We try to be as flexible as possible, and our teachers have really embraced that, and we want the parents that are out there to understand that they can communicate concerns directly to their teacher. We're being flexible. In the event that a concern can't be worked out, they should contact the principal, but I think everybody is pitching in to make this online instructional program work as well as it can. It's going remarkably well and we're getting a lot of positive feedback from both our teachers, and our parents, and our students, however it's not perfect. It is not the same as replicating what would occur in a classroom. Additionally, we are required under the Executive order to continue to provide students with lunches and breakfast. The state and the federal government modified the Department of Agriculture regulations to enable us to serve any children who need a lunch and a breakfast, not just those who are eligible for free and reduced lunch. We've been serving about 165 meals per day, which is very good and we have been preparing those lunches out of Goff Middle School and Phyllis Sanford and her staff are doing an excellent job. Additionally, while we're not required by the state to do this. We recognize that there is a need in the community and in the county for families who may need food. If anybody ever doubted that there was a lot of good in this world, they should go up to Columbia High School and see what's going on up there. I went up there this afternoon, Mike Leonard has put together an outstanding group of volunteers, including many of our employees. The high school office is filled, the high school office hallway is filled, and the conference room is filled, not only with the donated food that is being distributed to the families, but special packages that have been prepared and will be delivered starting tomorrow for Passover and Easter celebrations, including large donations from restaurants and businesses that are just phenomenal. I want to thank Mike, Audra DiBacco, who is one of our social workers, and all of the volunteers who are working on that. The high school loop has been filled with people, full of our parents and our community members just there to drop off food and it's been a just completely remarkable effort and a reflection of the generosity of this community. Outstanding job there, and again, if anybody is watching this and needs anything they can email Mr. Leonard, who's our Athletic Director and we will take care of it. Additionally, there is a requirement for schools to ensure childcare is

available for essential workers. Since the Governor's first executive order, the categories of essential workers who can benefit from this have been expanded, so it includes healthcare workers, nurses, doctors, people who work in hospitals in any healthcare related field. It includes First Responders, including our police, our fire, our emergency personnel. People who work in construction are considered to be essential. People who work in grocery stores are considered to be essential. People who work for the Department of Corrections. There's a complete list that is both on the governor's website but also on some of the publicity that we put out about the childcare program. If there are families that have a need, we have opened a program in partnership with the YMCA. That program is operating currently at Goff Middle School, in the cafeteria. It currently has anywhere between four and seven children attending per day and we can accommodate up to 10 children in the YMCA program. There are also other community-based daycares who have agreed to provide options for families who are considered essential workers including, Viking daycare, which is located up at Hudson Valley as well as Bloom and Grow daycare, which is located up in North Greenbush over within the church that's behind the CDTA bus stop. I do not remember the name of the church up there, but it is located over there and they have slots available. They can accommodate young children from 6 weeks to 3 to 4 years old. The program at Goff is for elementary-age children, school-age children. The agreement with the YMCA as well as some other assurances related to the YMCA's responsibilities versus the district responsibilities, as well as the protocols that are being followed by the YMCA staff, as well as the district is providing nursing support in the schools. All those issues are outlined in attachments on the board agenda, and we would anticipate some discussions about those arrangements this evening at the Board meeting. We are hoping the Board will approve the agreement, which was reviewed by our attorneys, with the YMCA and has satisfied the district's concerns as the YMCA's concerns as well. We are happy to do it. We have found that because of the work-from-home orders that have been in place, that the need for this childcare has not been as great as anticipated but that could change with periodic extensions of school closings, should that happen. We're available at this point to accommodate the needs. We're doing really well, it's been very very challenging for everybody involved. We've had great support from our Board and our community, and our people are doing a great job. I'll say from my own vantage point, I miss our people, I miss the kids and I miss working on a daily basis, other than through Zoom with my administrators. I look forward down the road to recapturing some of the connectedness that may be lost to some degree through technology, but at the same time I think the level of cooperation, coordination, communication and helping each other has been extraordinary, and I appreciate everyone's efforts.

**Michael Buono:** Thanks, Jeff. Board members, there are a lot of attachments and the public commentary as Jeff mentioned, regarding the Y program, the protocol, and that all the different processes are being followed. Do you have any questions for Jeff regarding that Y program? Again, that was a program that was at the Y, they closed, we took it over at Goff, but contracted with the YMCA to run that program, essentially. Any questions at this point for Jeff, on that program? Or anything else that he discussed?

**Mark Mann:** We're mandated by the Governor to do this, right?

**Jeffrey Simons:** Yes

**Mark Mann:** This is a school district run program, correct?

**Jeffrey Simons:** It is a school district mandate, school districts have the option to work with community-based partners who are already licensed through the Office of Children and Family Services to provide the service to the kids. OCFS, YMCA, Greenbush Child Care and others are licensed daycare providers and we are authorized through the regulations to work with one of those partners to provide it. We have to provide, either with a partner or by employing our own staff. I was informed today that the Governor is reviewing, that the Governor's office is reviewing those childcare plans. Yes, we are mandated to do it, it's not an option. Some districts have partnered together to provide the same option, for example Rensselaer City School District, Schodack Central School District and Wynantskill are partnered in the same plan with us, but they haven't had any kids. We did that collaboratively. Each school district is not required to have its own, but you are required to offer it to the families of your children.

**Mark Mann:** Thank you

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

**Michael Buono:** Any other questions for Mr. Simons? OK, Hearing none or seeing none, we will now move on to our discussion items. With the meeting a few weeks ago we had gone over some of the budget items, but things have changed. I'll turn over to Mr. Edson to walk us through some of the areas of the 2020-2021 budget. Please, we will need your feedback, board members, on some of the things that come up today. Ok?

**Lawrence Edson:** I'm going to start with the slide presentation.

**Michael Buono:** Ok

**Lawrence Edson:** Mr Simons is the presenter.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Peter is going to try to get the presentation up on the screen so everybody who's participating in the meeting can see it and I'm going to present from here and make sure everybody can hear my voice.

**Michael Buono:** Are you doing the slide presentation and Larry will do some pieces within?

**Jeffrey Simons:** Yes

**Michael Buono:** Ok, thank you

**Jeffrey Simons:** Can everybody hear me? Since the last time we presented the school district budget at the meeting at Genet, some things have changed. In particular, the district has received its state aid report as the New York State Legislature and the Governor agreed to a state budget. We also want to start this presentation by sharing with everybody that because of the COVID-19 concerns and the inability of people to get together in groups, as well as to participate in activities that bring lots of people together, the state has made a determination to change the timeline for both the school board election as well as the budget vote. While there are no definitive timelines as of yet, the language of the legislation indicates that it will happen sometime after June 1st. We have more time to develop our budget and the board election and the budget vote won't occur until sometime after June 1st. The information I'm going to present tonight takes the amount of revenue that we now know we're going to receive in state aid, plugged it into really the same framework for the budget that we presented the last time. We have some other considerations to take under consideration regarding how the state may or may not adjust our revenues based on the physical condition of the state, which due to the impact of the COVID-19, sales tax revenues of New York State, as well as income tax revenues of New York State have taken a significant hit. We were anticipating that that would hit would hit our school district worse than it actually did, and we were encouraged to some degree by the fact that the Governor and the Legislature made a decision regarding state aid that districts would not receive any increase next year in foundation aid and receive the same amount of foundation aid next year as they did this year. One of the issues that was impacting our district and others was the Governor had initially proposed to take aids that were based on expenses, such as transportation aid, BOCES aid, textbook, Library and instructional materials aides and roll them into the foundation aid. The final state budget did not do that and so the effect of that was our BOCES aid increased. The net effect of the foundation aid being frozen next year at the current level, with the decoupling of our expense driven aids which Mr. Edson will get into the details later. The net effect of that was we're basically in the same point of about \$25,000 less than what we anticipated when it all comes together. There is an important caveat to all of this, in passing the state budget, the state also informed the school districts that there will be three periods of time at which the state will review its receipts. Districts are informed that during those periods of time, the Governor's budget director can take back some of the aid that they have given us. They reduced some of the aid, they brought it back through some of the federal monies that they received. but we don't know if that reduction will happen, what that amount will be, but we will know sometime. The first period ends April 30th. I'm going to caution everybody that we just need to take a little time to see what that impact is going to be between now and April 30th, and that is a recommendation of the Council of School Superintendents, as well as the School Board Association and ASBO. Revenues that's plugged into the slides that you're going to see in just a bit, could change and it could be reduced. Peter, I need a little help with this.

**Peter Goodwin:** Do you have your clicker?

**Jeffrey Simons:** Yes

**Peter Goodwin:** Just turn it on

**Jeffrey Simons:** Traditionally, we take a look at where we've been and where we're going. We bring your attention to a slide that indicates that our current year, this is the year we're currently operating in a budget that is 95.9 million. Ten years ago the budget was 83.6 million. The budget increased in that year by 1.65%. The current year's budget increased by, not much different, about 1.76%. Notice the state aid, this is critically important. In 2009 & 2010, ten years ago, we were actually receiving in real dollars more state support, 28 million dollars to 25 million dollars today. Certainly our expenses have gone up, the states portion of our school district budget has decreased over the last ten years. The state used to pay for about 33% of our school district budget, but now only pays about 27%. The level of state support, we have been talking about this for a number of years, for our schools has declined. Additionally, the tax levy 10 years ago yielded about 48 million dollars. This current year, it yields about 57.5 million dollars and as the percentage of the budget, you can see that the percentage of our school budget supported by our local taxpayers has increased, because the percentage of our budget supported by the state has declined. The other way to look at it through a pie chart, we have a little over 57% of our budget being supported by the tax levy in 2009 & 2010 and about 33.5% supported by state aid. We see quite a shift over the last 10 years in the reduction of the state's support to about 26.9%. The revenues flowing into the budget to meet expenses, more of the revenues are coming as a percentage of the overall budget from the local tax levy. Looking at trends up to the current year which is 2019-2020. Over the last 3 years, we have made the point, we had an advocacy forum and earlier this year, that the state aid we have been receiving has been the lowest state aid increases that any I district has received in the last 3 years and those increases have declined each year. To offset cuts in programs, we have raised our tax levy 3.7, 4.27% and 3.69%. I would point out, in each of the cases for the last 3 years, in fact every year, since there has been a tax cap, our district has proposed a budget that has remained within the tax cap. We'd like to compare our tax rates to other districts that are like ours. East Greenbush tax rate is not the highest, it's not the lowest, we're somewhere in the middle of the pack. We look at five year averages of our tax levy. Over a five-year period we are not the highest, we're not the lowest. For a 10-year period, we are the second lowest. East Greenbush's average tax levy increase over the last 10 years has been 1.83%. You will see later on that moving into next year, our current tax cap is about 1.62%, which is the lowest it has been in a number of years. We will have to keep our budget with a tax levy a 1.62% or lower. Typically, we talk about areas of the budget on the operation side which includes transportation. The Board and the community is familiar with how we go about purchasing transportation through a fleet replacement plan. It keeps our buses safe, modern and efficient. We also use monies that have been set aside, through tight management of our budget, in a transportation reserve to buy buses which saves principal and interest on borrowing for our taxpayers. Also operation and maintenance, we have a lot of buildings, we have a lot of property. Operation and maintenance includes our maintenance employees, our custodial employees, our Director of Facilities, and everyone who keeps, and our grounds people who keep our buildings and our properties in good shape. Operation of the Board of Education, I would have to say that Board of Education members don't get paid. It's a volunteer job, but they put as many hours in as you might imagine someone getting paid to do it. There's more than just two meetings a month. There are a lot of committees and work that our Board does, but typically we need some supplies and some equipment, and other materials to operate the Board of Education. Central Administration includes the Superintendent's office, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Financing, the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, the administration of personnel, the Director of Personnel and Human Resources, Employee benefits are included within the portions of the budget that are available for your review. BOCES services, we not only rely on BOCES for Career Technical education, programs for kids who want to pursue vocational options, we also rely on BOCES for administrative services and technology services. Also, I plan to discuss our estimated revenues. I want to talk a little bit about the fleet replacement plan. The complete fleet replacement plan is available on the website for the public to see. We are planning, again

everything is subject to modification, based on what I shared regarding the picture of the state. We were planning to purchase a total of eight buses this year, including four 66 passenger buses, two 30 passenger buses, one 30 passenger bus and one 22 passenger bus at a total cost of \$736,000. For all of those buses we have sufficient monies in our transportation reserve to purchase those buses. We also trade in our old buses to take advantage of some additional revenue, as well, when we purchase the buses. That plan for fleet replacement was initially presented to the Board in October.

**Kathleen Curtin:** The first phase of the budget is April 30th. That is when we can find out if they are taking money back after they told us what our number is.

**Jeffrey Simons:** We take into consideration, through the safety, the mileage of the buses, the operating maintenance costs, fuel efficiency and estimated life of the bus. The state will reimburse us for every dollar that we use to purchase a bus, about 65 cents on the dollar. That money goes right back into the transportation reserve to be able to purchase future buses, again with no interest and principal on that borrowing. The borrowing is not necessary because we use the reserve. It's a cycle, we purchase new buses, we replenish the reserve through the transportation aid that comes in and any additional optional funding through Board action we can fund those reserves. We typically do that on an annual basis.

**Mark Mann:** Can I ask you a question about buses?

**Jeffrey Simons:** Sure

**Mark Mann:** Do we shop around for the best bus prices, or do we continually just buy from the same company?

**Lawrence Edson:** We buy them on state contract, one of the reasons we do that is because the state has done the bidding process. It doesn't always make sense to shop around, because you might save money on the bus purchase, but then you don't have the standardization of parts, which you can buy in bulk, for replacement. The mechanics are familiar and trained with particular models and so there is a lot of standardization that goes on with the fleet. We see that in our report that over time, there are only four manufacturers of buses in the fleet for that standardization process

**Mark Noeth:** Standardization also streamlines our parts purchasing, so that we only purchase a certain amount of parts, and we can keep in stock the parts that we need to repair the buses that we have.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Thanks, Mark

There are some additional operation and maintenance equipment that we would like to purchase. In the same way that we've had a replacement schedule for our buses, I think two years ago or so, we looked at some of the needs of our maintenance vehicles. We were able to purchase some of those this year. The budget would include a dump plow truck at the cost of about \$72,000, and an additional mower for about \$46,000 at a total cost of \$118. The data regarding the condition, the age of these vehicles was provided to the board previously. We can give you an update on that at some point, as we can try to make some decisions about what goes into the budget and what stays out of the budget. Moving to the numbers, again as I said earlier, some of the numbers have not changed because we don't know where we're going to go in terms of our revenue yet. We want to be very, very cautious. At this point, totaling everything up, the budget bill still is at 99.7 million dollars. The increase from the current budget, this year's budget to next year, including what we have in there now, is about 4%. In order to fund that budget we would need a tax levy up about 3.43%, which would yield about 1.97 million dollars. We will get that down because we have to live within the tax cap. Larry, just to confirm, it's 1.62?

**Lawrence Edson:** yes, 1.62%

**Jeffrey Simons:** 1.62%. The 1.62% tax cap yields about \$930,000 of revenue for the district. That would leave us with a remaining gap of just over a million dollars that we need to close. Later on, I'll ask Mr. Edson to talk about some ways we're taking under consideration to close that million-dollar gap. Under contingent budget under New York State law we can't raise taxes on the current year, so we would have to forgo revenues associated with a tax increase and we would need to cut 1.97 million dollars worth of cuts. That would likely be staffing and programs to get to that number. We don't know when the vote is going to be, but the budget vote will include a vote on the spending plan, it will include the purchase of the eight buses at this point, and



election of three board members at a date to be determined. This timeline is about as good as it was when the state made the decision to change the timeline. We're hoping to be able to update this, let me get more information from the state. Here we are, this is our second budget review session on April 8th. Typically we would have a meeting on April 15th and propose adoption to the Board. We are not recommending that we do that, until we see what our revenues are going to be. The deadline for board positions is extended out, as is the, all the public hearing requirements. We really don't know when the vote is, the language says sometime after June 1st. This is all new to us and we're waiting for further guidance, but this is where we're at at this point with everything. At this time I'll take any questions or concerns regarding the budget. Again what we can do over the next few weeks is very dependent upon what we learn regarding our revenues from the state. We have to be cautious.

**Lawrence Edson:** One of the concerns we do have with the vote is after June 1st. Currently the state plans to hold its primary June 23rd. If our vote, school vote date is close to that June 23rd date, I'm concerned about the availability of voting machines from the county. It's unsure, but if it's within a week of each other, it could be a paper ballot year and the process is very different than it is for machines. We are watching that but we don't have enough information at this time.

**Michael Buono:** Mr. Simons went through this slide presentation, we are going to stop sharing the screen right now, and then Board members, if there's any comments that you want to make about the budget, any questions you might have?

**Kathleen Curtin:** Can I just say it is very hard to hear Larry when he is talking. And whenever we talk anything budget, we definitely want to be able to hear him.

**Michael Buono:** Unfortunately, the microphone is on the left side, my left, and Larry's way to my right in the far corner so is there something you want him to repeat at all?

**Kathleen Curtin:** I honestly don't know because I didn't really hear it.

**Jeffrey Simons:** What Larry said was related to the timeline, and concerns that. Maybe Larry can move down to the other end of the table.

**Michael Buono:** We are relocating Larry to my left. The thing is we don't know when the budget vote will be. You know the Governor has said something about the primary, and paper ballots and those issues that still need to be worked out. The issue really is how the vote will be able to take place, machine and/or paper or a combination, we don't know yet. So we will turn it over to Larry.

**Lawrence Edson:** There are a few other attachments to the agenda item. The first one being the fund balance projection. The last projection was presented to the Board on January 8th. This one is in the same format as that projection and it's a quick look at where we might end up at the end of the year. Now I did this as of March 14th, which was before our closure. It is good as of the 14th and where it will go after this, there is some uncertainty again with our revenues as Mr. Simons mentioned with the State potentially taking back some funds either in April or the May/June timeframe during this school year. The current fund balance projection shows a surplus of \$660,000 over the previous years fund balance, which is good. The Board may choose to use some of this to fund a reserve which may fund a portion of next year's budget. It is certainly something that could be considered with our shortfall, which was previously mentioned, and was a little over 1 million dollars. The second item was the State Aid analysis, and Mr. Simons did such a great job of reviewing the state budget major points, that I have mostly check marks next to my notes, and there are only a few things I wanted to mention. One is that changes in the building aid and transportation aid calculations have been rejected by the Legislature. That's good news for us, however with residential placements for students in the special education program, we are going to be picking up an additional 18% share of those placements. Beginning April 1st of this year, because it's based on the State budget year, through next year, March 31st, and then, of course, it could be renewable. Unfortunately, I did not bring with me tonight what that impact was, but I'm going to have to look it up, because we did calculate it at some point. Currently, the district is at two residential placements. So this could be a dollar impact to our budget and actually the current year's budget for a few months. Other things of note in the state budget was the change in the mandatory paid time off for voting. That's essentially

been mostly repealed by the state budget. There used to be a requirement that if there wasn't a four hour threshold of consecutive hours for people to go and vote while the polls are open, the employer would have to provide paid time leave, and now that has been rolled back and the maximum amount of time is two hours. Essentially, according to the New York State School Boards, we are going back to the pre 2019 rules in this area. This is something that School Boards Association lobbied very diligently for during the budget process. A little good news in the State budget. You will also see attached an updated revenue summary. This takes the new state aid numbers and puts them into our projection. You'll see that one of the major changes in the revenue summary from the Board's preliminary estimate is in PILOT agreements, because our local industrial development agency consolidated a number of the PILOT agreements that relate to Regeneron. That produced some additional revenue as you see, some of the construction that's been going on, over the past few months in the Third Avenue Ext area, that is going to change our revenues in the next school year. Therefore, that dropped the tax cap calculation from 2.19, I believe in the initial estimate to the Board, it's now at 1.62. That was a plus, but it didn't change the gap because PILOT revenues move with the tax cap calculation. We are still above the tax cap calculation by a million dollars. Other than the ones that are noted for state aid, there weren't other changes to that document. Lastly, one of the Board objectives this year was to develop the Debt Service Plan. This is not a common document in school districts through the State. One of my challenges in the past month was to find a good sample online, and I was unsuccessful with that and so I created my own, naturally. What you have in front of you has about six parts. There is an executive summary, some notes, a debt exclusion summary, that is a tax cap calculation for the next four years, and short and long term debt schedules. This information will eventually feed into a long range plan that the Board has targeted for April, depending on when the Board adopts a budget to go to the voters. That may move to May. You'll see in the executive summary that it is important to manage that tax cap calculation because variations are going to increase or decrease the percentage that is available for taxation. Similarly, short term debt will increase over this time period based on financing to support Phase 2 and Phase 3 construction, which will take place over the next two summers. You can expect at least two financings during the four year period, usually through bond anticipation notes to support that construction. Long term debt, I'm not anticipating that there will be any changes or conversions to bonds during the period. As with any of our debt service and our planning, we should consult with Capital Markets, who is the district's financial advisor, before we implement any pieces of this plan. The building condition survey will be a requirement of all schools in the next few years, ours is slated for calendar year 2022. If the Board does it early in that calendar year, we could possibly plan for a future capital project to go to the voters in May 2023, with potential construction in the summer of 2025. As part of that planning process, the five year facilities plan and the athletic fields plan would need to be updated. Lastly, when I did this, we were internally looking at the debt service reserve fund, and that's not something that comes up in conversation that often, it's separate from the district's general fund, and for many years the balance hasn't changed significantly. There's 2.2 million dollars in that fund and like many other school districts, who haven't really done anything with their debt service funds, the Comptroller has ruled that districts need to liquidate them over a time period. This debt service plan has a five-year step down approach where these revenues would come in and offset debt service expense payments in the general fund. Also, noted in the debt service plan, our reporting to the State Education Department is up-to-date. You'll see beyond that executive summary there's lots of schedules, a lot of information that looks similar but not exactly like what you see in the district's annual financial statements, that come to the Board each October. If the Board accepts this plan, I will post it on the website along with the other financial plans on the budget and tax page. That's all I have.

**Michael Buono:** Any questions for Larry, Board members? Regarding this? I thought that was excellent. I appreciate that, Larry. It was a lot of work and a lot of information. One of the bullets that you talked about, just recently, the lines says, you propose the funds would be applied as revenue according to the following schedule. That is the five year plan, if we accept that, would you expect that that would be applied for the next year's budget.

**Lawrence Edson:** It is, it's part of the Board's budget proposal, it's in the preliminary estimate. I thought for impact purposes, I used a kind of step down approach. I mean it could be all at once, that's a big impact all at once, it could be even, but this changes approximately by \$75,000 per year.

**Michael Buono:** Per year? OK, but it is possible to move that? That's your proposal to step it down, but we could use it.

**Lawrence Edson:** Yes, you can change in any year.

**Michael Buono:** All right, great

**Lawrence Edson:** This is just a guideline, but the first year is in your budget proposal.

**Michael Buono:** Any other questions for Larry regarding the information he shared with us? Board members?

**Lawrence Edson:** Could there be consideration to accept the debt service plan?

**Michael Buono:** You want us to do it as a vote? Larry's asking and we are asking that we accept the debt service plan. I need a motion to approve that. Board members? Jen, second?

**JoAnn Taylor:** I make a motion

**Michael Buono:** JoAnn, in favor, good, all those in favor, good? Hands up, (everyone raises their hands) good We don't have anyone opposed, abstaining? No?, (8- Ayes) Good there we go. Thank you, Larry Any other general comments from the Board members regarding the budget? I think this is a year we have to look at the reserves and think about what it looks like. We have a tax cap that is much lower than we're used to. We know the economic conditions that were facing, or the uncertainty were facing really, but we have time though, to keep looking at this. As Jeff mentioned in his presentation the first milestone is at the end of April. We do have until June something for the budget, so we have some time to continue to look at this. Fortunately or unfortunately. We want to preserve our programs, but we know we have an obligation to our taxpayers and the impact that this virus is having on our communities, with unemployment and all those things that goes into it. It is going to be a very challenging year, I think we positioned ourselves as a community, as a school district, overtime to weather this as best we can and try and preserve our programs that we have built and have tried so hard to maintain and improve opportunities for our students. Any other comments?

**Kathleen Curtin:** I have to admit this is not as bad as I thought it was going to be. I really appreciate all the hard work you put in Jeff, and especially you, Larry, to kind of help us understand. When you were first looking at all of this, I was very, very concerned about what next year was going to look like. I am not happy to see the budget, but I'm not as worried as I was and I do believe we will make it through. Like Mike said, it's very tough times and we will do what we need to for our community.

**Michael Buono:** Thanks, Kathleen. Anyone else? No

**Jeffrey Simons:** I would like to add one more thing, if I could.

**Michael Buono:** Yes, Jeff

**Jeffrey Simons:** One of the issues I'm thinking about, and I don't have a lot of information, is what will the impact of online learning be on certain children who rely on services. There are services that are being provided remotely that aren't, it is not ideal. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, they're doing the best they can. Speech services and other certain special education services. The law under this school closing requires us to provide those services to the best degree that we can, but we don't know yet what the full impact would be or what the potential regression of certain students might be. I just put that out there for consideration because the law requires us, if our committee on special education feels there's been some regression as a result of students being at home in learning, under the law, services need to be adjusted and increased. We don't know what that's going to be, so that's an area of expense that could potentially increase. If we look at trying to be as efficient as possible, our class sizes are balanced right now to some degree across all the elementary schools. Our academic intervention services are based on needs of the kids currently but those are also areas that might be affected by the fact that some children aren't getting as much benefit out of the online learning as others. We are gonna really have to take a hard look at that before we could say. What are some contingencies we need to build in the budget and the event at those services have to be increased or those class sizes may have to be adjusted? It's just another big unknown right now.

**Michael Buono:** Any final comments? Okay, seeing none. Thank you, Larry. You want to stay here in case there are any questions?

**Lawrence Edson:** Yes

**Michael Buono:** Moving to the next item for discussion. It is the Board meeting schedule. Anything to discuss there, Larry, that you would like to mention to the Board?

**Lawrence Edson:** I think it is a pretty standard schedule. The only thing I would note is the organizational meeting date is set for...I don't have it in front of me....

**Michael Buono:** July 7th

**Lawrence Edson:** July 7th, We would like some feedback as to whether that date can work for Board members because there's a number of things that will be coming up soon. Mark (Adam) will be doing the calendar, it's good for planning. We don't need an answer tonight, but we put it on for some feedback in case that date worked, or it could be as late as the following week, It could be July 14th. It really can be anytime between the 1st and the 15 by Board resolution. We wanted to know if that was a conflict for members

**Michael Buono:** If we can give some feedback to Larry on the 7th or the 14th, but prefer the 7th. There's no, so get that to Larr as soon as you can, so we can finalize the calendar. I'll be fine with that, Larry, assuming I get reelected.

**Lawrence Edson:** Ok

**Kathleen Curtin:** I think the 7th is fine with me. Right now, my calendar is wide open.

**Michael Buono:** Yes, I think people might've scrubbed a lot of things given what's going on.

**Michelle Skumurski:** The 7th works for me, too

**Jennifer Massey:** The 7th works for me.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Michael Buono:** Email Larry if it is not good then. Ok? otherwise we will stay with the 7th.

Moving on in our agenda: We typically do committee reports, but we are going to hold off on those for tonight, unless there is something burning that people want to bring up.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Maybe I'll ask Jim, I think he is ready for this. Jim are you still out there?

**James McHugh:** I'm here

**Jeffrey Simons:** We started a process today in talking with the High School Administrators, the Middle School Administrators department chairs about the impact of the suspension of the Regents Exams. The guidelines came out yesterday from State Ed. How the specific courses will be affected, how grading might be affected. We don't have all those decisions made yet, but I just wanted Jim to talk about the process.

Jim McHugh: Mr. Harkin and I had some conversations starting yesterday. Mike spoke with our department chairs, some of our core department chairs, and folks from our guidance department. The first thing that we are doing is we are creating some lists, and we are pulling students that might have an average between 60-64, as a final average right now. We are pooling our kids in different categories like that, just so we know which students to really focus in on. Our high school administrators and our high school guidance counselors, along with our teachers have been making phone calls home to students, really monitoring Google classroom, and staying on top of the students that really haven't responded to the remote instruction as of this date. Really pushing those students to get engaged and get that work completed. Our guidance counselor chair is attending a Cap Region guidance counselor meeting coming up this Friday. She will also be attending the Suburban Council Guidance counselor meeting. Mr. Harkin will be participating in the Suburban Council's principals meeting. We will get a sense of what other schools and other districts are doing in regards to final averages. We do use APEX for some students for credit recovery. We are looking for those students that might be in a significant hole at this time, that might need the use of APEX. Typically the Regents were 15% of the final grade, so we are working with our department chairs to figure out how best to advocate for our students, and support our students during this challenging time, and how those calculations should be made to determine that final average.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Thanks, Jim

**Michael Buono:** Thanks, Jim. I think some of the programs we put in place to help our students in terms of graduation, I'm thinking of OG and other programs, we have to just continue to look at how this is impacting the students who don't have the resources, or don't have the support. They may need some additional support to help them get through this. There are a lot of challenges, and I know that the staff are rising to the occasion to help every student and parent who needs that support. Thank you for that.

#### MINUTES

**Michael Buono:** Moving on to the next order of business, is the minutes. We have the draft minutes for March 11. At that meeting, John and Jen were not there. Is there any change or corrections to the minutes for March 11th? There is none, I need a motion to approve that.

**Mark Mann:** I will

**Michael Buono:** Mark. I can't see the screen right now. Peter is going back to it. I will need a second.

**Michelle Skumurski:** Second

**Michael Buono:** Michelle All those in favor? ( 7 raise their hands) 7 Ayes Sustaining? Jen. Approved  
The next one is the minutes from March 18th. Any questions or comments? Changes or revisions? Ok, if none, I need a motion to approve those minutes. Everyone was here. Jennifer, Joann, I see your hand went up. All those in favor, ( All Board members raised their hands) 8 Ayes, Approved

#### REGULAR BUSINESS

**Michael Buono:** Moving on to the Approval of Programs for Resident Children with Disabilities. Any questions or comments? If not, I need a motion to approve that. Michelle, second, Karen. All those in favor, (All eight Board Members raised their hands) 8 Ayes, Approved.

#### REPORTS AND PRESENTATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

**Michael Buono:** Moving on to Reports and Presentations of the Superintendent:

**Jeffrey Simons:** nothing further

**Michael Buono:** Nothing further, ok

#### TABLED MOTIONS

**Michael Buono:** Tabled Motions: I have none at this time

#### OLD BUSINESS

**Michael Buono:** Old business: Anything, Board members, that you want to bring up right now that was brought up in the past? None, Okay

#### CONSENT AGENDA

**Michael Buono:** Coming to the consent agenda, we do have a couple items we need to talk about. First I will need a motion to change the agenda slightly. There is an item H, regarding construction work that is essential that we need removed from the agenda. We are gonna add also, did we add the student teacher to the agenda.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Yes, I think we did. Marissa, you added the student teacher, correct?

**Marissa Cannon:** That is correct, it is on the instructional personnel agenda, and it's item B.

**Michael Buono:** Just to clarify, in item B. They are working with a student at St. Rose, a student intern, who is going to work remotely with one of our staff members to help get the hours they need this year to graduate from their program.

**Jeffrey Simons:** It's a music education teacher who was doing his student teaching in another district and was advised that he would not be able to complete that requirement remotely by that district, and he is eligible to graduate this year. Scott Halliday has agreed to work with this student through some curriculum projects and some other things so that he can graduate from St. Rose and become a certified music teacher, and we think that's the right thing to do.

**Michael Buono:** The second item, we are going to remove Item H. What happened is the Empire State Development Corp had made a change in the way they classified construction of Capital projects in schools. Prior to this, there was a need to have a resolution to approve that, but that is no longer necessary based on the most recent guidance. I just need a motion change the consent agenda to remove item H and to add the

item Marissa just talked about with the student intern. Anybody, motion? Deanna, second, Michelle. Those in favor, we will change the agenda. ( All 8 Board members raised their hands) 8 Ayes, Items were changed, Approved.

Is there any items on the agenda for consent that you would like to talk about, in terms of the construction?, the bidding? Any other items, Jeff?

**Jeffrey Simons:** We have Lynn Elsworth here. Is Steve Wickman here, too?

**Steve Wickman:** Yes, I'm on Jeff

**Jeffrey Simons:** Ok, if you gentlemen could speak nice and loud. Could you explain for our Board's purposes the resolution F which is our Phase 2 work, and kinda outline the bids and the recommendations related to the alternates?

**Lynn Elsworth:** Do you want to start, Steve?

**Steve Wickman:** Yes, sure. As you know, we opened bids in early March and we received a pretty good response from our bids, with only two notable exceptions. One, we only received one GC bidder on the project, but in the grand scheme of things we are still under our target budget for the job. The GC bid that we did receive was very close to what we had estimated. We feel very comfortable with that number. The Second, as you probably know from your packet, there was one electrical bid, that decided that they had made a mistake in their bid and wanted to withdraw their bid, which we recommended the district allow them to withdraw. Third, there are multiple alternatives that go along with the GC bid. We are going to recommend, and it is up for your approval, that we award all alternates except for #1, which is the Goff Middle School nurses suite reconstruction and alternate # 4, which is the Green Meadow site work. I will tell you briefly why. The Goff nurses suite was never part of the original scope of work, it was something that was added later during design. Quite frankly, it's a lot of money. It's \$330,000, we didn't think it was worth the money to pursue that. Likewise, the Green Meadow site work is just a very small parking area, and the price we received on that from the one bidder was \$290,000, which we thought was excessive. The pavement isn't in that bad of shape that has to be replaced, so we want you to consider not awarding that alternate as well. Other than that we had 11.3 million to spend on this Phase, without those two alternates, we are at \$10.1 million, so we have got about \$1.2 million in contingency if need be,. I think we are in pretty good shape. Lynn, have I missed anything there?

**Lynn Elsworth:** The only thing would be the roofing on a couple of the buildings, at Genet and Green Meadow, was not included in the package that went out for these bids, that was a secondary relief valve that we had. If money is available, we can put that out to bid this coming summer. That's another \$670,000, but going into this bid we just didn't want to be that close to what we were afraid might happen.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Lynn, you have educated me on some potential contingencies with this project, particularly the Goff gymnasium panels, could you explain what we could potentially get into.

**Lynn Elsworth:** Yea, the drawings called for, those panels are asbestos containing, and it called for them to be refinished with scrape and paint, basically. In simple terms. Bob Mulick and I were up there today looking at them and there are spots that are probably going to need to be cut out by the asbestos abatement people when they are up there working on things, and repaired. We are not talking about huge things, here. We are talking about being repaired with bondo or something similar to that, and then coated with a material that will be better to withstand the elements. The short of it is, we got a price for that alternate of \$38,000. The likelihood, when it's all said and done it will be twice that, maybe pushing \$100,000. That was one of the reasons we wanted to have a reasonably large contingency, because that's one of the examples that asbestos is going to bite us. We have a lot of work in the schools that we are doing that asbestos is going to be removed from chases, so plumbing can be replaced, and until we open up the chases, we just don't know what we are truly going to find.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Thanks, Lynn

**Michael Buono:** Any questions for our architect or for Lynn?

**Mark Mann:** Do we still have work that is continuing in the buildings? Or has that all been halted?

**Lynn Elsworth:** I'm sorry, I didn't catch that.

**Mark Mann:** Do we still have work that's going on? Or has all the work been halted?

**Lynn Elsworth:** No, we still have electrical work going on for the fire alarm systems. The Genet building is probably within two weeks of being completed. Green Meadow is a little bit closer and we then still gotta go to Bell Top and DPS. This whole situation that we are in right now, has really thrown a monkey wrench into everybody's planning. When the work was stopped for a few days, because of the changing guidance that was coming out of the governor's office, three of the electricians couldn't come back, because one had developed the flu, another one couldn't find daycare, all kinds of things that under normal circumstances might not be a big deal for more than a day or two, but now with somebody with the flu, they have to stay out until they are fever free for three days and that kind of thing. It's limiting what's available for a workforce.

**Mark Mann:** Is this going to put us, obviously behind schedule?

**Lynn Elsworth:** I expect that the fire alarm, we had planned on it being substantially complete at the end of May. I'm expecting we are looking at the end of June at this point.

**Mark Mann:** Thank you

**Michael Buono:** Any more questions? No Thanks, fellows, it's obviously very challenging. Just keep Jeff informed about it and he can relate to the Board what is happening on a regular basis. It's good to know that. At least the guidance has changed, you can get in the buildings and they are practicing the protocols and the social distancing is required. We do have that on the agenda, too. That the contractors are making sure they are following those protocols. Any other questions on any other of the consent agenda items at this point?

**JoAnn Taylor:** Mike, I just like to make note of the retirement of Anne Warrington, a nurse at Red Mill for many, many years. I would like to congratulate her. I just want to make mention. I'm sure many of our new retirees are going to be struggling with their final year being what it was, just the same as our seniors. It's just something to think about their last year being so different from what they expected. I wish them well.

**Michael Buono:** That is a great point, JoAnn, thank you for mentioning that. Anyone else?

**Kathleen Curtin:** Mike, I just really want to thank Marissa and Jeff for working to help the young man get what he needs to graduate. Being someone who is working in higher education and trying to get our seniors through right now is a real challenge, so I really appreciate that the district stepped up to help somebody so he doesn't have to postpone his life because of everything else. Thank you so much for doing that.

**Michael Buono:** Yes, thank you very much. Building those bridges with higher ed and the teaching colleges, we want to make sure those students have a successful experience out of college and make sure that we continue. It is a great profession to go into and to encourage them to continue on and be part of the education community. Thanks for mentioning that. If there are no other questions, I will need a motion to approve the consent, the agenda items mentioned A-L with the one exception, taking out H. Kathleen, a second?, Karen all those in favor (all 8 Board members raised their hands), Approved, thank you very much.

NEW BUSINESS

**Michael Buono:** Any new business, Board members, that you want to bring up? No? OK

PUBLIC FORUM #2

**Michael Buono:** Public forum #2, do we have any emails?

**Jeffrey Simons:** We do.

**Michael Buono:** We do!

**Jeffrey Simons:** We have an email. We have one public comment from EGTA president Drew Romanowski, who submitted one via an email. I will read his statement. "My name is Drew Romanowski, I am the president of the East Greenbush Teachers Association and a Social Studies teacher at Columbia High School. You may have viewed this in Thursday's April 2nd weekly Advertiser, I am submitting an open thank you letter to you and our parents. "Dear parents, first I wanted to share my well wishes for your health and well being during these difficult times. COVID 19 has completely changed the structure of our lives in a matter of weeks. For teachers, the subsequent shift from in person instruction to remote learning is not ideal, we truly miss the kids. Please be assured that your teachers continue to prioritize the physical and mental well being of our students as we approach and navigate each day. I recognize that this change has brought more into your home and

now adds a new dynamic into your lives. Taking care of your child is the most important role that we continue to share. We are all trying our best during these challenging times. On behalf of your student's teachers, I sincerely say thank you to each of you for what you are doing. In appreciation, Drew." In addition, each day I am humbled to serve our teachers as their elected union president and am proud to do so. Having witnessed our teachers dedication, compassion, caring and to experience such a dramatic change in our profession first hand, it is truly impressive and inspiring to watch how our teachers have taken this in stride. On behalf of the Teachers Association, I personally thank you, as I also thank our District Administration and Board of Education for their support during these challenging times. Thank you, Drew Romanowski".

**Michael Buono:** Very good, thanks Jeff. I appreciate the comments from Mr. Romanowski. Is there any comments from the Board members, from our second board forum? Since that was the only public comment? Anyone? I just want to say, I think we echo a lot of things Drew said and a lot of things Mr. Simons has said, the work our community, our staff has been exceptional, They have been adaptable and flexible. They've been learning things that they never thought they would have to learn or would have to do, and adjusted to ways of working from home, and caring for their families. Surrounded by the different things we encounter day to day, like going to the grocery store and having to wear masks and gloves, and things like that. Really changing our lives quite a bit, and education has shifted because of that. I appreciate all the work that everyone has done from all of our staff, who have had to adjust and continue to maintain our buildings, to work hard and to support our students and our parents. Just the outpouring from the community, helping people get through difficult times through backpack programs, food donations, meal deliveries. We really do appreciate everything. The Board really wants to let the community know, we are there for them and as we come into deciding the budget, we will be very, very careful, look very closely at everything, make sure that we are presenting the budget that you can support knowing what we are all going through. Ok, that is my final comment. Anyone else? All right.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Michael Buono:** We do need to have an executive session for purposes of collective bargaining and personnel. I will ask the Board members, you are going to be given a different link to come onto the executive session. That will come from Peter.

**Peter Goodwin:** Yes, 10 minute break and it will come from me.

**Michael Buono:** 10 minute break and then it will come from Peter Goodwin directly so you can log back on. It will just go to Board members. I want to thank everybody for joining us tonight for our Board meeting remotely, it was quite an experience, different, but I think we got through it. I appreciate everyone's patience. Have a great night, we don't anticipate coming back for any Board business. Take care, have a good night, and again thanks. Again, Board members, 10 minute break, log back on. Peter Goodwin will send an email.

**Jeffrey Simons:** Marissa and Jim, you need to be a part of this meeting, too

**Michael Buono:** Marissa and Jim. I'm sorry, go ahead

**Jennifer Massey:** Do we need a motion to go into executive session

**Michael Buono:** Thank you for reminding me. I need a motion to go into executive session Jennifer, and Michelle, your arm's up. All those in favor? (all 8 Board members raise their hands) OK We are going into executive session, thank you and look for that email. Goodbye everybody.

**Jennifer Massey:** Goodbye everybody

**Michael Buono:** Take care.



